

THE WILSON BULLETIN.

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Edited by **LYNDS JONES.**

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EDITORIAL.

The editor spent July and the first half of August at that incomparable Marine Biological Laboratory, Woods Holl, Mass. While the islands of the region furnish perfect conditions for studying the breeding habits of three species of terns and one species of gull, the whole region is an exceptionally good one for the study of the summer habits of at least a dozen species of warblers, the Veery, and many other interesting birds, while on Martha's Vineyard the last of the Heath Hens may still be found. As a place for varied bird life it has few if any equals in our country. July and August are especially favorable months for bird study Woods Holl.

The July Auk contains the Twelfth Supplement to the A. O. U. Check-List. Twenty-three new species and subspecies are added, of which three are *Otocoris* and four *Melospiza*. It would be entirely possible to dispense with any more forms in these two already over crowded genera. The most marked feature of this revision is the raising to generic rank of 23 subgenera, by which several of our best friends assume a wholly unfamiliar name. But mere temporary inconvenience furnishes no argument against such radical change. We must feel some misgivings, however, when we reflect that in other departments of Zoology, speaking generally, there are often far greater differences between species than there

are between genera in Ornithology. One can hardly avoid the suspicion that Trinomialism is working this discrepancy. But we must also remember that intensive study, such as our chosen science is receiving, tends to discover differences where none were known to exist before, while it is also likely to magnify really slight differences. It is hard to draw the line. Former experiences prepared us for the usual reprinting of practically the whole *Melospiza* group. It is certainly a flexible genus or the contortions it is periodically called upon to go through would have disrupted it long ago. Forty proposed changes and additions were acted upon favorably, and nearly a hundred cases are deferred. We see no signs of the coming of stability in nomenclature, except the report of progress which this supplement may be considered to be.

PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED.

Birds in their Relation to Man. By Clarence M. Weed and Ned Dearborn. A Manual of Economic Ornithology for the United States and Canada. J. B. Lippincott Company, Philadelphia and London..

The timeliness of this new volume will ensure for it a welcome among bird students everywhere. It is well illustrated in halftones and cuts with many new pictures of birds and insects. It is printed on good heavy paper in twelve-point type, and the typography is unusually good.

The subject matter may be divided into four parts, the first seven chapters being devoted to a general discussion of "Methods of Studying the Food of Birds," "Development of Economic Ornithology," the food and amount consumed, "Birds as Regulators of Outbreaks of Injurious Animals," of the different groups, in the reverse order of the A. O. U. classification; the Conservation, Prevention of Depredations and Encouragement of the Presence of Birds; and finally an appendix giving the A. O. U. Model Bird Law, the Lacey Bird Law, "Some Fundamental Principles of Bird Laws," "A Partial Bibliography of the Economic Relations of North American Birds," and Index.

Into this volume have been gathered the many scattering accounts of the food of birds, and some new information is given about the food of several species. It is not assumed that everything has been learned about the food of our birds, but it is hoped that the book will prove of some value to those who wish to learn what the economic status of the different birds is. It is a welcome addition to bird literature, and we have reason to thank the authors for their timely presentation of the book.

L. J.